

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 5846

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SUBJECT: SPAIN AND THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR
EUROPEAN MIGRATION (ICEM)

REF: STATE 181893, MADRID 5714, STATE 187421

1. SUBSEQUENT TO THE AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABOUT SPANISH POSITION ON ICEM MEMBERSHIP, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS (DURAN) CALLED IN EMBOFF TO CONVEY SPANISH VIEWS.

2. DURAN SAID SPANISH DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO WITHDRAW FROM ICEM THOUGH THE SPANISH POSITION MIGHT BE RECONSIDERED LATER ON SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE. EMBOFF ASKED WHAT WERE THE SPANISH REASONS AND DURAN SAID THAT THE QUOTA WAS QUITE LARGE, AND THAT SPAIN GOT LITTLE FROM ICEM, AND THAT SPAIN NOW HAD NO ONE IN AN IMPORTANT POSITION. HE NOTED THAT THE CURRENT DEPUTY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (JORGE DEL PINO) HAD HELD AN IMPORTANT POSITION SOME YEARS BACK BUT NOW THERE WAS NO ONE. HE ADDED THAT SPAIN ALSO HAD DIFFICULTIES IN THAT MANY SPANISH MIGRANTS WERE ILLEGALLY IN THE UNITED STATES AND BECAUSE OF THE "RIDICULOUSLY SMALL IMMIGRANT QUOTA" COULD NOT GET THEIR STATUS LEGALIZED.

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3. EMBOFF IGNORED THIS EXTRANEIOUS ARGUMENT AND EXPRESSED

OUR REGRET, PRESSING THE ARGUMENTS IN THE DEPT'S FIRST MESSAGE ABOUT THE CONTINUED ARRIVAL OF CUBAN REFUGEES, IN WHICH ICEM PERFORMED A SERVICE FOR SPAIN DIRECTLY, AND SPANISH LEADERSHIP IN RESPECT TO THE GROWING LATIN AMERICAN REFUGEE PROBLEM. DURAN LISTENED WITH INTEREST BUT NOTED THAT IT WAS STRANGE THAT WE SHOULD SPEAK OF SPANISH LEADERSHIP WHEN SPAIN HAD NO IMPORTANT POSITION IN THE ICEM STRUCTURE AND THE POSTION DEALING WITH LATIN AMERICA WAS OCCUPIED BY AN ITALIAN.

4. EMBOFF NOTED THAT DURAN HAD SAID THAT SPAIN MIGHT RECONDISER IF CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE AND WONDERED WHAT THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT BE. DURNA SIAD HE COULDN'T SAY THIS OFFICIALLY BUT "UNOFFICIALLY" HE THOUGHT THAT IF PROVISIONS WERE MADE FOR HIGH LEVEL SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE SECRETARIAT IT MIGHT WELL DO THE TRICK. EMBOFF PROMISED TO REPORT THIS "WITH DISCRETION" AND THEN NOTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD ALSO MENTIONED THIS PROBLEM TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THAT OREJA HAD PROMISED TO RE-EXAMINE THE PROBLEM. DURAN SAID THAT HE HAD NOT TALKED WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER BUT WITH UNDER SECRETARY SOLANO ON THIS MATTER.

5. APPARENTLY "PERSONNEL PROBLEMS" ARE, IN FACT, AT THE ROOT OF SPAIN'S DISPLEASURE WITH THE ICEM. WE DEDUCE THAT THE MINISTRY AND SOLANO IN GENEVA HAVE BEEN UNHAPPY FOR SOME TIME, AND FEELING IGNORED, DECIDED TO GET OUT. WE CANNOT JUDGE FROM HERE THE WORTH OF SPAIN'S MEMBERSHIP IN ICEM, BUT IF IT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AN EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE SPAIN'S CONCERN ON THE PERSONNEL PROBLEM SEEMS ALMOST NECESSARY.

6. WE WILL COMMUNICATE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THE INFORMATION ON OUR OPPOSITION TO "CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES" IN THE LATEST REFERENCE RECEIVED AFTER THIS CONVERSATION. STABLER

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